

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

3-23-2016

Gardner-Webb Hunt School of Nursing Partners with Community for Medical, Spiritual Ministry

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

Gardner-Webb Hunt School of Nursing Partners with Community for Medical, Spiritual Ministry

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gardner-webb-hunt-school-of-nursing-partners-with-community-for-medical-spiritual-ministry/

Office of University
Communications

March 23, 2016

Nursing Faculty and Students Work With N.C. Baptist Men, Local Church to Provide Health Screening Program for Men

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—In addition to providing world-class healthcare training for its students, the Gardner-Webb University Hunt School of Nursing connects with the surrounding community to offer medical, educational and ministry resources to improve the overall well being of residents. Those commitments were on display recently in a partnership with the N.C. Baptist Men, Crestview Baptist Church and several other local agencies that joined to provide uninsured men with tests for glucose and cholesterol levels, screenings for depression and other conditions, and information on topics such as nutrition and disease prevention.

Volunteers with the N.C. Baptist Men parked the organization's mobile Health Screening Ministry bus at Crestview Baptist Church between Boiling Springs and Shelby, and GWU faculty and students provided a variety of nursing services including blood tests and wellness brochures. The church also provided assistance, including lunch and spiritual care. Screenings helped identify emergency medical needs of at least two men, one with a high blood sugar level and another with an infection and inflammation in his foot, and both men were connected with additional healthcare resources.

“Those are two people who will hopefully receive care who wouldn't have received it otherwise, and that's what it's all about,” explained Dr. Sharon Starr, dean of the Hunt School of Nursing at Gardner-Webb. “These men have nowhere else to go, but today they are in a safe place, have learned about their health, and can interact with people who care about them. The whole day is a ministry just for them, and it gives the nursing school a chance to have a link in the community to provide care for people who need it.”

With events like the screening day, the array of opportunities nursing provides for helping people attracted GWU senior Jillian Birkenstock, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) student, to the profession and to Gardner-Webb's academic program. She helped research and coordinate a nutrition project for a nursing class and presented much of that information to men during the Health Screening Ministry visit. Birkenstock said Gardner-Webb's nursing school has also provided many other connections to improve the community, including a dance class service for Shelby's Life Enrichment Center that

developed from a gerontology class project.

“I’ve really learned what role a nurse plays in a community,” Birkenstock shared. “More than just people who give medication, we’re supposed to be people who are there to listen and care. I feel like I was called to take care of people. The nursing program at Gardner-Webb stresses who the nurse is as a person, not just the skills we need to know, and there are so many ways we can serve others. That’s important when you’re blessed to be able to have an education.”

Cleveland County Parish Nurse Ministry worked with the Cleveland County Rescue Mission’s homeless shelter in Shelby and other locations to identify men for the health screenings at Crestview. GWU senior BSN student Jonathan Walker heard men’s stories of key medical needs and no health insurance coverage as he helped direct participants between stations at the event. He also noted the number of Gardner-Webb faculty and students who participated in the first-time ministry program, which nursing school leaders hope to make an annual event that continues to grow.

“People in the Gardner-Webb School of Nursing care about what’s happening around them,” Walker added. “We have so many opportunities to be involved and help others beyond the classroom.”

For 50 years (1965-2015), the Gardner-Webb University Hunt School of Nursing has educated quality, highly-skilled nursing professionals. The school offers nursing degrees from the associate to doctorate levels and has awarded nearly 3,500 total degrees. Accreditation is maintained through the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing Inc. (ACEN). For more information, visit gardner-webb.edu/nursing.

N.C. Baptist Men operates as an auxiliary to the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, seeking to initiate and network to discover mission needs, to educate and disciple people concerning their own spiritual growth, gifts and abilities, and to motivate and lead people in meeting those mission needs. For more information, visit baptistsonmission.org.